



Economic and Social Council

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New York, 28 June-22 July 2010

Item 2 (c) of the provisional agenda*

**Annual ministerial review: implementing the internationally
agreed goals and commitments in regard to gender equality
and empowerment of women**

**Statement submitted by the Congregation of Our Lady of Charity
of the Good Shepherd, a non-governmental organization in
consultative status with the Economic and Social Council**

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 30 and 31 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

* E/2010/100.

Statement

Vision, investment, implementation: gender equality and the empowerment of women

The persistence of gender inequality is the greatest contributing factor to girls' and women's disempowerment, as is witnessed in the "feminization of poverty", the increasing feminization of migration and increased trafficking of girls and women. In its resolution 54/4, the Commission on the Status of Women, expressed its concern about the increasing feminization of poverty and noted the growing body of evidence demonstrating that investing in women and girls has a multiplier effect on productivity, efficiency and sustained economic growth and that increasing women's economic empowerment is central to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals and to the eradication of poverty.

What is stifling our action if we recognize the negative reality before us and have some awareness of the solution? Could it be that we have lost sight of the higher ideals set out in the Millennium Declaration, namely, to promote gender equality and the empowerment of women as effective ways to combat poverty, hunger and disease and to stimulate development that is truly sustainable?

We suggest that addressing the evidence of girls' and women's disempowerment solely through the lens of economics is actually losing sight of the higher ideals of gender equality. What is required is a vision of the transformation of social relations and, in this transformation, the norms of equality and social solidarity will prevail.

As long as girls and women continue to live in a world where they are oppressed in cultures based on power, male privilege, male dominance and patriarchy, there will be a continual erosion of human rights and a perpetuation of gender discrimination and inequality expressed in increasing levels of poverty, gender-based violence and human trafficking. Gender equality and equitable power relations must be experienced by all persons, both women and men, for change to occur. The human rights of each person as called for in the Charter of the United Nations must be respected. When this happens, political will to allocate resources becomes imperative. Concrete actions must be taken to bring about this transformation:

- Implement coherent human-rights-based national policies that explicitly denounce gender inequality and its perpetuation as a violation of girls' and women's human rights
- Strengthen community educational programmes that address gender inequality, patriarchy and male privilege and have zero tolerance for any form of gender discrimination
- Enforce existing laws relating to gender-based violence, including domestic violence, discrimination, sexual exploitation, prostitution and human trafficking
- Adopt a holistic approach to women's empowerment that links social policies and economics, informal and formal economies, as well as unpaid and paid work

- Continue to invest in girls and women through social expenditure on education and health
 - Finance immediately and implement the Millennium Development Goals in every country without exception
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Statement submitted by Equidad de Genero: Ciudadania, Trabajo y Familia, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 30 and 31 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

* E/2010/100.

Statement

Gender mainstreaming as a strategy of actions

It is a challenge to achieve the international goals and commitments in the area of gender equality and to assess the state of implementation of the gender-related goals and the United Nations development agenda. Meeting this challenge would require moving from intentions to actions and achieving gender equality in budgets and programmes.

Gender mainstreaming is a formal strategy of institutional engineering designed to optimize actions and budgets in order to address structural inequalities suffered by women, thus contributing to the direct achievement of Millennium Development Goals 3 (Promote gender equality and empower women) and 5 (Improve maternal health) and, in general, to the full achievement of the rest of the Goals.

Gender mainstreaming requires a methodological procedure of implementation to modify discrimination and formal and informal power structures within institutions and to transform the logic of planning and budgeting, so that public policies and programmes adhere to a gender perspective.

There are four conditions necessary to ensure progression and sustainability in the process of gender mainstreaming at the institutional level: (a) modification of all normative documents in the spirit of the harmonization of international and national instruments for gender equality; (b) development of a gender mechanism (a gender unit or department) to ensure equality between women and men within the structure of the institution; (c) planning and budgeting with a gender perspective in both internal and external policies to address the different needs and interests of women and men; (d) integration of a gender perspective in the specific procedures of each institutional area in order to unify the goal of the mission and the vision of the institution. These four conditions complement each other, and although their implementation must be acknowledged as a long-term process, it will gradually lead to structural change. This methodological approach allows for the development of a system of monitoring and evaluation and strengthens transparency and accountability at all levels.

Gender planning and budgeting within the gender mainstreaming strategy promotes the modification of individual programmes until a gender perspective is fully integrated throughout the programmatic structure, both in internal (including normative harmonization and policies addressing discrimination against women, for example, so-called glass ceilings) and external policies. This methodological approach uses a systematic scheme to fulfil the goals and commitments of gender equality. It also helps to assess the degree of implementation, the quality of the actions and the budgetary amounts allocated to women's advancement.

The commitment of Governments to implement a gender mainstreaming strategy in every public institution would be a clear statement of their interest in achieving the Millennium Development Goals. Since all of the Goals are interrelated, it is necessary to implement a holistic intervention in order to achieve them. The way to do this is through the integration of a gender perspective throughout the governmental structure.



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Statement submitted by Family Care International, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 30 and 31 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

^a E/2010/100.

Statement

In internationally agreed commitments, including the International Conference on Population and Development programme of action and the Millennium Development Goals, the global community has affirmed the interconnectedness of gender equality and women's health, particularly maternal and reproductive health. Poverty and gender inequalities pose significant barriers to maternal and reproductive health-care access and utilization. Protecting the human rights of women, including their reproductive rights, and ensuring women's sexual and reproductive health are central to empowering women.

Despite the availability of low-cost, high-impact interventions to address poor maternal health, health systems and current financial commitments for maternal and reproductive health are not sufficient to achieve Millennium Development Goal 5. Globally, at least 200 million women lack access to family planning and reproductive health care, and at least 60 million women give birth each year without a skilled attendant. As a result, some 350,000 women die in childbirth or from pregnancy-related causes each year. Virtually all of these maternal deaths are preventable, and it is time for the global community to fully commit to meeting the Goal 5 targets. No woman should die giving life.

This annual ministerial review comes at a critical time for mobilizing substantial increases in political and financial commitments to achieving the Millennium Development Goals and to addressing the unacceptably high global rates of maternal, newborn and child mortality and morbidity. Family Care International welcomes the leadership of the Secretary-General in the development of a joint action plan for meeting Goals 4 and 5. The organization urges participants in the review to:

- (a) Affirm the importance of implementing the internationally agreed goals and commitments, including the International Conference on Population and Development programme of action, the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, the Millennium Development Goals and the Human Rights Council resolution on preventable maternal mortality and morbidity and human rights;
- (b) Encourage the creation of development policies that affirm political commitments for maternal, newborn and child health, including reproductive health, and recognize the integral links between investment in maternal and reproductive health and global efforts to eradicate poverty and achieve economic and social development;
- (c) Develop criteria for development aid that ensure investment in long-term, evidence-based, high-quality interventions, delivered through effective health systems and with the full support and engagement of communities. These interventions should include comprehensive family planning; skilled care during and after pregnancy and childbirth; safe abortion services, when legal; immediate post-natal care for mother and newborn; and improved child nutrition. These efforts should take into account prevailing gender inequalities and discrimination, which prevent women and girls from accessing available health services;
- (d) Support an increase in financial commitments for maternal, newborn and child health, as well as reproductive health. An additional \$5 billion per year at the minimum is needed to accelerate progress on Goals 4 and 5;

(e) Develop an effective, gender-responsive accountability mechanism and agreed set of indicators to ensure development cooperation on and track progress towards achieving Goal 5.



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**Statement submitted by Family Research Council, a
non-governmental organization in consultative status with
the Economic and Social Council**

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 30 and 31 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

* E/2010/100.



Statement

Scientific, peer-reviewed studies on the psychological impact of abortion

As the United Nations strives to achieve Millennium Development Goal 5 (Improve maternal health) and, specifically, target 5.B (Achieve, by 2015, universal access to reproductive health), women deserve the unbiased consideration and inclusion of all peer-reviewed studies examining abortion's effect on women's health.

Scientific evidence shows that abortion is associated with a wide range of serious and lasting mental health problems. A New Zealand study showed that women who had had an abortion had elevated rates of subsequent mental health problems including depression, anxiety, suicidal behaviours and substance use disorders. The study also showed that the association between abortion and mental health problems persisted after adjustment for confounding factors.

A study using nationally representative United States data with statistical controls showed abortion was a risk factor for post-traumatic stress disorder, major depression and numerous other psychiatric disorders.

Many studies link abortion and suicide. A study in Finland showed that women who had an abortion had six times the risk of death from suicide compared to women who carried to term. A study of more than 173,000 patient records showed an increased rate of suicide over the eight years studied that was not explained by prior mental illness. There are reports of attempted or completed suicides coinciding with the anniversary date of the abortion or expected due date of the aborted child.

A systematic article review showed that abortion was associated with increased risk of depression and attempts at suicide or self-harm.

A South African study revealed that 18 per cent of abortion patients were diagnosed with post-traumatic stress disorder three months after the procedure.

Post-traumatic stress disorder is a predictor of poor general health. Effects of trauma often last for many years.



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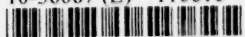
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Item 2 (b) of the provisional agenda*
Development Cooperation Forum

**Statement submitted by Christian Blind Mission International,
a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the
Economic and Social Council**

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 30 and 31 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

* E/2010/100.



Statement

Christian Blind Mission International is an international disability and development organization working to improve the quality of life of persons with disabilities in the most disadvantaged communities of the world.

Christian Blind Mission International is part of the International Disability and Development Consortium aiming to promote inclusive development. Inclusive development is about respecting the full human rights of every person, acknowledging diversity, eradicating poverty and ensuring that all people are fully included and can actively participate in development processes and activities regardless of age, gender, disability, state of health, ethnic origin or any other characteristic.

The Millennium Development Goals, the international benchmarks for alleviating poverty through global progress in vital areas such as education, health and gender equality, make no mention of persons with disabilities.

The recently adopted General Assembly resolution on aligning the Millennium Development Goals towards disability issues in which the Assembly urges Governments and Member States to explicitly include disability issues and persons with disabilities in national plans and tools designed to contribute to the full realization of the Goals, is undoubtedly a good step. But in the context of the high-level plenary meeting to review the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals, which will be held in September 2010, it will take both political will and concrete actions to make progress towards the inclusion of persons with disabilities in the plans to achieve the Goals by 2015. More than 80 representatives of disabled people's organizations, development non-governmental organizations, international organizations and Governments from 24 countries came together to discuss the inclusion of people with disabilities in the context of the Millennium Development Goals at Senec, Bratislava, Slovakia, on 14 and 15 May 2007. This International Disability and Development Consortium conference concluded with clear recommendations to various stakeholders at all levels in the development arena:

- Ensure that the Millennium Development Goal framework incorporates and actively promotes adherence to and implementation of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
- The United Nations regional commissions must align their positions and reporting to the terms of the new Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities;
- Gather more accurate and reliable data on the situation of persons with disabilities living in the poorest communities and include disabled people's organizations in this
- Systematically include a disability perspective and gather information on the status of persons with disabilities in all Millennium Development Goals country analyses
- Invest in global partnerships to promote inclusive development; poverty and exclusion of persons with disabilities are a global phenomenon and a global challenge

- North-South cooperation is required to address these problems; respect the terms of article 32 of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities on international cooperation, and promote disability as a cross-cutting issue in all development programmes
 - Improve communication on realizing the Millennium Development Goals for persons with disabilities and on their representative organizations and demystify the language behind the Goals
 - Support awareness-raising activities for disability inclusion in development cooperation and poverty reduction
 - Build the capacity of non-governmental organizations on disability inclusion, empower persons with disabilities in developing countries, invest in global partnerships of disabled people's organizations.
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**Statement submitted by Imamia Medics International, a
non-governmental organization in consultative status with
the Economic and Social Council**

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 30 and 31 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

* E/2010/100.



Statement

Gender equality and health

Imamia Medics International, a non-governmental organization in special consultative status with the Economic and Social Council, is committed to improving access to quality health care and enhancing disease prevention globally. Disparities between men and women in health status and health-care access are products of gender inequality. As such, Imamia Medics International encourages the Council to examine the relationship between health and gender while addressing the theme of the 2010 annual ministerial review: "Implementing the internationally agreed goals and commitments in regards to gender equality and empowerment of women".

Maternal mortality is the most striking inequality in public health. The international community agreed to address this issue through Goal 5 of the Millennium Development Goals, with a three-quarter reduction of the maternal mortality ratio between 1990 and 2015. States were tasked with an annual reduction of 5.5 per cent; however, with the current rate of progress much lower than that, the world will fall considerably short of the target. According to the *Millennium Development Goals Report 2009*, between 1990 and 2005, sub-Saharan Africa and Southern Asia account for 85 per cent of all maternal deaths, with half of all maternal deaths (265,000) occurring in sub-Saharan Africa and another third (187,000) in Southern Asia. Yet, States in sub-Saharan Africa and Southern Asia have demonstrated a deterioration or no progress regarding maternal mortality.

As recognized at the annual ministerial review regional preparatory meeting on women and health, the causes of maternal mortality and morbidity are well-known, as are the interventions to combat them. Most maternal deaths occur during or shortly after childbirth, and almost all are preventable if women are assisted at the time by a health-care professional with the necessary skills, equipment and medicines to prevent and manage complications. Appropriate care is often of poor-quality, unavailable, inaccessible or unused. In addition to the lack of money or proximity to health facilities hindering women's access to health care, services are often unused or inaccessible due to social inequities: a woman may be unable to receive treatment because community norms prevent her from travelling alone to a clinic. Care may also be inaccessible if a woman feels uncomfortable, or social norms prevent her from receiving treatment from males. Successful strategies to improve maternal health must be comprehensive, addressing not only the need to improve the quality of care but also the geographic, financial and cultural barriers.

Imamia Medics International therefore encourages potential partnerships on projects like our Binte Khadija maternity home project in Pakistan and recommends that agencies, donors and Governments:

- Provide sufficient financing to strengthen health systems, particularly for maternal, childcare and reproductive health services
- Establish programmes to reduce maternal mortality and ensure universal access to reproductive health care, including in remote areas

- Provide trained health workers, including skilled females, during/after pregnancy and childbirth for delivery of quality antenatal care, timely emergency obstetric services and contraception
 - Adopt and implement policies that protect poor families from the consequences of unaffordable maternity care, including through access to free services
 - Work with community-based health-care projects, educate women and their communities about health promotion and disease prevention and involve men in maternal health and wider reproductive health matters.
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**Statement submitted by UNANIMA International, a
non-governmental organization in consultative status with
the Economic and Social Council**

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 30 and 31 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

* E/2010/100.



Statement

Innovative sources of financing for development

Given the ongoing discussion on official development assistance to assist in financing for development and the constant request, which has not been met, for the developed industrialized countries to actually meet the goal of allocating 0.7 per cent of their gross national income for development needs, it seems clear that official development assistance will never be sufficient to allow for the financing of such things as the Millennium Development Goals, let alone the crises of health and climate change.

We believe, along with CIDSE and others, that innovative mechanisms are urgently needed to support action to tackle both of these needs. Ethical behaviour in justice requires that the countries that have primarily caused the various crises of the last decade contribute proportionally to the solution of these problems for those most affected.

Given the potential double benefits of addressing systemic issues and raising finances, we join those who promote the adoption of global taxes as innovative mechanisms to finance development.

For this reason, we want to call on the industrialized developed countries to work to accept such taxes and to use them to finance development and not to use them to meet the "business as usual" desires of those countries that have been responsible for the lack of development and the various crises in the first place.

We believe that the recently published reports by the International Monetary Fund and the European Commission on financial sector taxation, which assumes that any innovative sources of financing will be used to continue a "bail out" of those who caused the crises in the first place, should be rejected on two counts:

(a) It is urgent to put in place new sources of financing for development, such as the currency transaction tax of Spahn and the general financial transaction tax, with a dual role of raising funds for development and regulating effect on financial markets;

(b) The revenue from these sources should be for development and to meet the needs of those countries most vulnerable to the negative effects of this period.



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**Statement submitted by Legião da Boa Vontade, a
non-governmental organization in consultative status
with the Economic and Social Council**

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 30 and 31 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

* E/2010/100.

Statement

The Legion of Good Will, a Brazilian civil society organization in general consultative status with the Economic and Social Council, which for 60 years has been proposing and implementing humanitarian and socio-educational programmes, continues its widespread awareness work on the themes connected to the Millennium Development Goals.

Aiming at contributing to the annual ministerial review and the High-level Plenary Meeting of the General Assembly, the Legion of Good Will sets out in the present statement the results of the 7th Solidary Society Network Multi-stakeholder Forum: 4th Innovation Fair, which was held from 12 to 26 March 2010, in five Latin American countries where the organization carries out its activities (Brazil, Argentina, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Paraguay and Uruguay).

Focusing on Goal 3 of the Millennium Development Goals, "To promote gender equality and empower women", chosen in accordance with the guidelines of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs and with the support of the United Nations information centres for Brazil and for Argentina and Uruguay (UNIC-Rio and UNIC-Buenos Aires), the United Nations Development Programme in Argentina, Paraguay and Uruguay, UNICEF Argentina, the United Nations Population Fund in Argentina, Paraguay and Uruguay, and the United Nations Development Fund for Women in Bolivia, the Forum conducted a national poll employing virtual questionnaires, as well as meetings and exhibition fairs (booths and cultural activities), at which representatives from the public, private and academic spheres and civil society took part. It is worth mentioning that 2,171 social organizations and informal community leadership groups participated, sharing information, success stories and innovative social technologies that today generate positive results that can be replicated.

Throughout its six decades of work, the Legion of Good Will has been promoting the complete education of the human being as the vector of much-needed social transformations. For the Legion of Good Will, the 7th Forum represents more than a contribution towards the internationally agreed commitments that favour gender equality. It also represents a possibility to analyse the theme under a perspective that takes all levels of education and work into consideration, in the equitable control of resources and an egalitarian representation in public life, as an environment dedicated to a legitimate and urgent cause, because from its earliest days, the organization has counted on women's social activism. The majority of the Legion of Good Will staff of volunteers and employees are women.

In Brazil, according to the findings of the Toledo e Associados research institute, 86 per cent of the participants in the human development programmes carried out by the Legion of Good Will are girls and women living in situations of social vulnerability. The organization constantly conducts — within its schools network, homes for the elderly and community centres as well as on its websites, radio and television programmes and in its publications — campaigns for the valorization of life, which make children, young people and families aware of their rights and of the mechanisms for ensuring and enforcing such rights, offering support whenever necessary.

The present document contains proposals and recommendations from the Forum's participants, stemming from their own practical experience, as well as

proposals for a series of innovative social technologies experienced by the Legion of Good Will.

Recommendations

- To ensure a greater inclusion of women in the national development process by encouraging the creation of policies and specific measures for achieving this purpose
- To disseminate national and international normative frameworks in which women's rights are protected
- To devise incentives that increase the participation of women on all levels of decision-making processes
- To devise a national scientific agenda that prioritizes research in the gender area, ensuring financing and the divulgation of the results, especially among the creators of public policies
- To establish public policies on women's complete health care that give priority and resources to gender and ethnicity issues in accordance with local needs, managing policies in the health area in order to enforce their application in the national health system
- To qualify health professionals to deal with gender and ethnicity issues, ensuring appropriate assistance for women in the puerperium and for those who have suffered any form of sexual violence
- To establish continuous formation processes in gender issues within State functions, with an emphasis on the areas of law and public safety
- To increase women's access to credit, productive resources, information and professional qualifications and encourage entrepreneurship
- To implement policies that enable enrolment and permanence in educational institutions for young mothers living in situations of social vulnerability
- To incorporate the subject of gender into the curriculum of teacher training courses as a transversal topic and create courses on this theme for professionals
- To improve labour and social security legislation so as to have it encompass the unpaid work done by mothers and by caretakers of relatives who are elderly or have health problems
- To devise specific measures to protect household workers, especially immigrants
- To increase the number of police stations that are specialized in caring for women
- To structure the means to ensure the eradication of violence against women, especially when it occurs in situations of armed conflict and when it occurs due to discrimination in terms of ethnicity, social and economic status, religions, marital status, sexual orientation or any other form of discrimination

- To increase the use of new technologies by women living in situations of poverty, by means of professional training and an easier access to equipment and connection networks
- To replicate the experience of the Government of Brazil with the implementation of the Maria da Penha Law and the national plan to face violence against women, which has established a new legal landmark in dealing with this matter

The 7th Forum demonstrated that empowering women fulfils Goal 3 and also efficiently broadens the reach of the remaining challenges of the global development agenda. However, the degree of women's vulnerability remains high: they were the first to be impacted by the food and financial crisis; millions fell back to their previous situation of poverty. Today, it is feared that the effects of climate change can deepen gender inequality.

Latin America combines favourable conditions to face this trend. In Brazil, for instance, average female schooling exceeds that of males. There is a significant participation of women in the economy and an increase in the income of the population as a whole.

Another successful example of a recommendation of social technology is the learning and interaction programme applied by the Legion of Good Will for people of various generations within the scope of both formal and informal education and based on the pedagogy of affection and on the ecumenical citizen pedagogy, devised by educator Paiva Netto. The programme's main results demonstrate the perception and critical attitude of participants regarding ethnical, social, territorial and gender prejudices within a perspective in which each person is a spiritual-biopsychosocial being.

The pedagogical proposal on which the programme is based acknowledges the intrinsic peculiarities of the female sex, emphasizing its protagonism in modern days and throughout history, which are echoed in the words of the Legion of Good Will leader,

Women, the most beautiful side of humanity, singularize the foundation of all great accomplishments. That which physically constitutes us is generated in their wombs (...). Components of the female gender become indispensable elements for the survival of good causes. Stable organizations count on stable women. (...) My intention here is to stress the fact of how important the mission of women is for human evolution and for world safety (...). Our first steps towards the development of citizenship are guided by those who take us by the hand from childhood. World stability begins in the hearts of children. That is why at the Legion of Good Will we have been practising for so many years now what we call the pedagogy of affection and the ecumenical citizen pedagogy.

Aimed at children up to the age of 10, the pedagogy of affection contributes towards girls learning to defend themselves against any violation of their rights since it produces at the same time a bond and a relationship of trust between education professionals and students in the classroom environment and provides an ecumenical and universal insight of values into the context of each age group, strengthening the student's emotional security.

The ecumenical citizen pedagogy applied to young people and adults alike, proposes handling the current everyday situations of students in a transversal manner, with an emphasis on the issues concerning discrimination against women and on the available instruments to prevent it. These practices have an impact on the overall development of students who have achieved excellence with regard to their intellectual formation.

Added to this educational proposal, the learning and interaction programme works in the following manner: at least once a week, a volunteer or hired professional, after undergoing specific training, will mediate weekly meetings of small groups (maximum 30 people, depending on the profile of the members), which can vary a great deal according to the demands and social composition of the community.

Boys and men also participate. With them, their awareness on the meaning of being fathers is addressed as well as the need to improve the sharing of responsibilities in caring for their children and relatives who need special care. From an early stage, youngsters learn what family planning is all about and receive instruction to guide their mothers and sisters on the rights of women. They are brought up in a culture of non-aggression and respect for the female gender.

Understanding that the victimization of women, as with other social problems, begins in the realm of fundamental values, the Legion of Good Will concentrates its efforts on prevention. To this end, it considers education as the most efficient path, especially — but not exclusively — of the newer generations, with the involvement of families as a fundamental factor for the success of these actions.

Therefore, the Legion of Good Will acknowledges schools and other educational environments, such as its community centres and means of communication, as privileged loci to intervene against the social factors contributing to poverty and violence, supporting the idea that other public and private institutions also commit themselves to this same role in their communities, becoming radiating centres of equality and social justice.

On this opportunity, the Legion of Good Will wishes to warmly greet all the women and men who have demonstrated an impartial partnership towards this accomplishment, focusing on the acknowledgement and diffusion of equal rights and shared responsibilities, invigorating and strengthening the militancy for a solidary, altruistic and ecumenical society. The Legion of Good Will forges ahead in the diffusion of these themes through the use of radio and television broadcasting and digital means of communication. Other contributions, not contained in the present document, are available from www.boavontade.com and www.legionofgoodwill.org.



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**Statement submitted by Life Ethics Educational Association, a
non-governmental organization in consultative status with the
Economic and Social Council**

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 30 and 31 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

* E/2010/100.



Statement

At the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing in 1995, the States Members of the United Nations agreed that sex-selective abortion is a form of violence and discrimination most acutely felt by the women of the world. Demographers estimate that as many as 100 million girls are missing because of sex-selective abortion and female infanticide. Because of prenatal sex selection, countless girls are denied the right to exist just because they are female. Even though Member States acknowledged the problem of sex-selected abortion, little has been done by the international community since Beijing to address this issue, despite its devastating demographic implications and the violation of the human rights of girls and women.

The practice of sex-selective abortion is a worldwide problem, not limited to any one country or region. Sex-selective abortion is a practice whereby parents choose to terminate a pregnancy because the unborn child is not of the desired sex. It is generally carried out against baby girls. The practice has led to unnatural gender imbalances in some countries, mostly in Asia. In some areas of China, for instance, as many as 150 boys are born for every 100 girls, creating a dramatic demographic crisis.

According to Nicholas Eberstadt of the American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research, sex-selective abortions have permanently skewed the demographic balance of China. Sex-selective abortions are also skewing the demographic balance of India, and have crept into Eastern Europe and Latin America.

We ask that the United Nations take measures to address this problem as part of its ongoing attempts to combat both violence and discrimination against women. A few countries have begun to realize the many negative long-term security, cultural and societal implications of disparate sex ratios on their populations.

We urge States to:

- Enact laws that explicitly ban the practices of sex-selective abortion and female infanticide and punish both doctors and parents that engage in such practices
- Rescind existing laws or regulations that give preferential treatment to sons
- Rescind any laws or regulations that restrict the ability of families to freely decide on the number of children they may have
- Conduct and maintain census data that accurately show the overall and child sex ratios of their populations
- Ban the practice of using technologies solely to determine the sex of unborn children
- Enact laws that prohibit abortion for sex selection.



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**Statement submitted by National Right to Life Educational Trust
Fund, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with
the Economic and Social Council**

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 30 and 31 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

* E/2010/100.



Statement

Does legalizing abortion protect women's health?

The World Health Organization (WHO) says that 99 per cent of maternal deaths from abortion take place in the developing world. Some claim that repealing laws prohibiting abortion would decrease maternal mortality and morbidity caused by illegal abortions. But this claim is contrary to the available evidence. It is the lack of modern medicine and quality health care, not the prohibition of abortion, that results in high maternal mortality rates. Legalized abortion actually leads to more abortions.

In South Africa, for example, the number of abortions rose from an estimated 1,600 in 1996, the year before abortion was legalized, to 85,621 in 2005. By contrast, when Poland finally prohibited most abortions following decades of Government-funded abortion on demand, evidence suggests that the total number of abortions (legal and illegal) fell dramatically.

Evidence shows that a country's maternal mortality rate is determined by the quality of medical care rather than by the legal status of abortion. Abortion complications are not a function of the legality of the procedure, but of the overall medical circumstances in which abortion is performed.

In the developing world, if legalization triggered a higher demand for abortion, the number of women competing for scarce resources would increase and more women would die or be harmed by abortion.

In the developed world, the steep decline in maternal mortality rates coincided with the development of obstetric techniques and an improvement in the general health status of women (from 1935 to the 1950s), according to WHO. This took place well before the widespread legalization of abortion.

Malaysia and Sri Lanka have sharply reduced maternal mortality rates by making professional midwives and supervisory nurse-midwives widely available in rural areas and by providing a steady supply of appropriate drugs and equipment, improved communication, transportation and backup services.

A comparison between nations that have strong abortion restrictions, such as Ireland and Poland, and nations that permit abortion on demand, such as the Russian Federation and the United States, demonstrates that nations with strong abortion restrictions actually have lower maternal death rates than countries that permit abortion on demand.

In India, abortion is broadly legal but maternal deaths are common owing to dangerous medical conditions. According to the report "Abortion Policies: A Global Review" by the United Nations Population Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, despite the liberalization of the abortion law, unsafe abortions have contributed to the high rates of maternal mortality in India (570 maternal deaths per 100,000 live births in 1990).

In Paraguay, despite the prohibition of most abortions and the fact that clandestine abortion is common, the rate actually declined from 300 deaths per 100,000 live births in 1986 to the most recent 1995 Government estimate of 190 deaths per 100,000 live births.

Laws against abortion are necessary to protect not just unborn children, but their mothers as well.



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Item 2 (a) of the provisional agenda*

**High-level policy dialogue with international financial and
trade institutions**

**Statement submitted by UNANIMA International, a
non-governmental organization in consultative status
with the Economic and Social Council**

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 30 and 31 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

* E/2010/100.



Statement

Impact of the global economic crises on civil society organizations

A number of civil society organizations have reported substantial reductions in their funding and have expressed concern that this threatened their ability to deliver their services. To see how representative this was, a global survey of civil society organizations was undertaken at the end of 2009, under the guidance of a steering committee. Some 640 civil society organizations widely distributed among the different regions of the world responded to the survey, most of them from Africa (33 per cent), Asia (23 per cent), Europe (19 per cent), the United States and Canada (13 per cent) and Latin America (9 per cent).

Although some received increased funding, overall, the survey found a worsening financial situation for civil society organizations in the period 2008-2009. The organizations explained that, owing to the world economic crisis, grants from existing sources decreased. Most of the reductions occurred in sub-Saharan Africa. There were reductions by individual contributors, private foundations, international institutions and Governments, although not necessarily by all categories at once. Many humanitarian and development civil society organizations, especially in Europe, are intensifying their fund-raising efforts, and several have been forced to cut back their aid programmes owing to the global recession. The prospects for 2010 do not look better. The decline in revenue comes at the same time as demand for services is increasing, requiring more, not less, funding. Civil society organizations report that the amount and scope of requests for support by the constituencies and partners of civil society organizations has grown since 2006. They project further increases in requests for emergency relief and support to provide basic social services in the next two years.

The participants in the study have made some recommendations to Governments and urge them to mobilize the requisite resources for social development. This would require tackling corruption and establishing a fair taxation structure, social safety nets and basic income grants. Internationally, participants called for donor Governments to step up their development assistance and to support the United Nations proposal on a social protection floor as well as the International Labour Organization (ILO) Global Jobs Pact. Finally, civil society organizations look to the international community for more effective cooperation in reducing opportunities for tax evasion and in developing innovative sources of financing for global public goods. One option for such additional funds would be a financial transaction tax, which would be established by national Governments to tax transactions in all kinds of financial assets: shares, bonds, securities and derivatives. It is expected that a tax rate of just 0.1 per cent would yield \$734.8 billion worldwide. The participants also expressed the need to restate global principles through a new "United Nations charter for a sustainable and socially oriented market economy".

The current situation demonstrates that the ability of civil society organizations to mobilize financial resources weakens during a crisis, just when the need for their social services rises. Therefore, Governments should institutionalize stable and predictable funds for necessary programmes of civil society organizations during and following global crises.

The full study is available at <http://ngosocdev.wordpress.com/2010/01/28/174/>.



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Annual ministerial review: implementing the internationally agreed goals and commitments in regard to gender equality and empowerment of women

Statement submitted by Women's Environment and Development Organization, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 30 and 31 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

• E/2010/100.

10-36362 (E) 070610

Please recycle

Statement

At the Women's Environment and Development Organization, we welcome the focus of this year's annual ministerial review, "Implementing the internationally agreed goals and commitments in regard to gender equality and empowerment of women". We recognize that it underscores the importance of building the capacity of the United Nations and Member States to fulfil their commitments to women's empowerment and gender equality in the Millennium Development Goals and other international agreements.

Advancing women's empowerment and gender equality is a prerequisite to sustainable development and to adequately addressing the urgent global climate crisis. Goal 3 explicitly addresses gender equality and women's empowerment, and the success of the remaining seven goals and, for that matter, other internationally agreed commitments, is highly dependent on the achievement of Goal 3. As recognized in the Secretary-General's report entitled "Keeping the Promise: a forward-looking review to promote an agreed action agenda to achieve the Millennium Development Goals by 2015" (A/64/665), meeting the Millennium Development Goals by 2015 is far from a reality today. Women are still the poorest of the poor and disproportionately responsible for resource management and household activities, which inhibits opportunities for education, earning a formal wage, gaining land rights and escaping the cycle of poverty. Without ensuring that a gender perspective is integrated into climate change policies and activities, gender inequalities are exacerbated.

An important and crucial step towards advancing gender equality and women's empowerment is the launch of the United Nations gender equality entity. In September 2009, the General Assembly adopted a resolution (A/RES/63/311) supporting the consolidation of the existing four United Nations gender equality entities into a composite entity, to be headed by an Under-Secretary-General. Important fundamental elements of the new entity, as stated by the Gender Equality Architecture Reform (GEAR) campaign, are strong country-level presence, ambitious funding, formal mechanisms for civil society participation, particularly women's organizations, and a strong Under-Secretary-General. These elements will ensure that the United Nations and Member States can deliver on their various commitments, including the Millennium Development Goals, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and several others, to gender equality and women's empowerment.

For successful implementation, these commitments must be integrated into overall development goals, particularly as related to climate change and other crises that threaten sustainable development. Several sustainable development documents, the Convention on Biological Diversity, the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification and the Hyogo Framework for Action, already integrate women's empowerment and gender equality into the overall goals. This annual ministerial review is an opportunity for Member States to collaborate on innovative methods to meet targets that reaffirm the importance of gender equality in international development.

We urge Governments to recognize that the launch of a new, composite gender equality entity and collaboration on a gender-responsive global climate change agreement are vital to achieving the internationally agreed development goals.



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**Statement submitted by World Family Organization,
a non-governmental organization in consultative status
with the Economic and Social Council**

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 30 and 31 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

• E/2010/100.

10-36376 (E) 110610

Please recycle 

Statement

“Families in balance”: the Istanbul Declaration World Family Summit +5

We, ministers and representatives of Governments, civil society organizations, non-governmental organizations, academia, parliamentarians, private sector, media and families, 300 participants from 54 countries representing all continents, participating in the World Family Summit +5, having accomplished the agenda with fruitful discussions in all plenary sessions:

- Having considered the theme to be discussed at the 2010 annual ministerial review (Implementing the internationally agreed goals and commitments in regard to gender equality and empowerment of women) and the theme of the Development Cooperation Forum.
- Recalling the outcomes of the World Conference of the International Women's Year, Mexico City, 1975; the World Conference of the United Nations Decade for Women, Copenhagen, 1980; the World Conference to Review and Appraise the Achievements of the United Nations Decade for Women, Nairobi, 1985; the Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing, 1995; the five-year review of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (Beijing +5), New York, 2000; and the 10-year review and appraisal of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcomes of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, held during the forty-ninth session of the Commission on the Status of Women, 2005.
- Noting the outcomes of the preparation and celebration of the International Year of the Family, 1994; and the outcomes of the panel discussion at the United Nations in celebration of the tenth anniversary of the International Year of the Family, 2004.
- Recalling the Millennium Summit of the United Nations, held in 2000, the United Nations Millennium Declaration adopted and the commitments made by nations to a new global partnership to reduce extreme poverty, and setting out a series of time-bound targets, with a deadline of 2015, known as the Millennium Development Goals.
- Considering the recommendations and the declarations from the World Family Summit, Sanya, China, 2004; World Family Summit +1, Aracaju, Brazil, 2005; World Family Summit +2, Dead Sea, 2006; World Family Summit +3, Warsaw, 2007; and the World Family Summit +4, Cairo, 2008.
- Taking into account the 15-year review of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (Beijing +15), New York, March 2010.
- Recognizing that reducing inequality and empowering women are very powerful tools to reduce poverty and achieve high levels of well-being of families in all cultures and societies around the world.
- Recognizing that gender inequality is deeply rooted in entrenched attitudes, societal institutions and market forces, therefore, political commitments at the

highest international and national levels, and especially, actions at the local level are essential.

- Affirming that political commitments can allow the adequate establishment of policies that can target social changes and the allocation of the necessary resources to achieve gender equality and empowerment of women.
- Recognizing that gender is a social construct defining and differentiating the roles, rights, power, responsibilities and obligations of women and men, forming the basis of social norms that define behaviours for women and men and determine their social, economic and political power.
- Concerned that many obstacles, especially violence against women, prevent the achievement of equality, development and peace as recognized in the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women.
- Convinced that a document presented by the United Nations task force on Goal 3 of the Millennium Development Goals reflects the real need for a "Goal 3 plus approach".
- Welcoming the results and recommendations of the plenary sessions held at the World Family Summit +5 on the seven strategies mentioned in the document presented by the United Nations task force on Goal 3.

We adopted the following declaration:

- Achieving gender equality and empowering women is a problem that has solutions, and there is no better space than the family to start the dialogue about these solutions.

There are many practical steps that can reduce inequalities based on gender, which restrict the potential to reduce poverty and achieve high levels of well-being of the family in societies all over the world. Leadership and political will are the first and most important steps to be taken to achieve Goal 3. Because gender inequality is deeply rooted in entrenched attitudes, political commitment at the highest international, national, regional, local and family levels is essential to establish and implement policies that can trigger social changes.

We all agree that it is imperative to allocate adequate resources for gender equality and women's empowerment at the international, national, regional and local levels and to guarantee that the next decade will provide new and wider opportunities to take action globally to achieve gender equality and empower women, essentially to strengthen the family and meet all the Millennium Development Goals. We also agree that it is essential to promote a deep transformation in the way societies conceive and organize men's and women's roles and responsibilities, access to resources and control over them.

It is a common agreement of the delegates that, to ensure the achievement of the "Goal 3 plus approach" by 2015, there are seven interdependent priorities to empower women and alter the historical legacy and female disadvantage that remain in the family and in most societies of the world:

- Education. While sustaining the commitment to equal access to universal primary education for boys and girls, it is also essential to strengthen opportunities to access post-primary education. Evidence suggests that secondary and higher levels of education have the greatest pay-off for

women's empowerment, including increased income-earning potential, the ability to bargain for resources within the household, decision-making autonomy, control over fertility, participation in public life and strengthening the family.

- Reproductive health, rights and sexual education. Without guaranteed reproductive health and sexual education for girls, boys, women and men, the "Goal 3 plus approach" cannot be achieved. Reproductive and sexual health and rights are central to women's ability to build their capabilities inside the family and take advantage of economic and political opportunities and an effective control of their destiny. The implementation of efficient and effective public services in these areas, especially at the local level and in the family, is strategic for achieving gender equality and empowering women.
- Infrastructure. The lack of appropriate basic infrastructure, such as transport systems, water and sanitation, energy systems and nursery systems, as well as of sharing the household division of labour assignments and the responsibility of daily maintenance tasks, limits gender equality and the empowerment of women. Increasing women's participation in the design and implementation of family-oriented infrastructure policies and projects will certainly help to overcome gender equality obstacles.
- Property and inheritance rights. Ensuring that women have property and inheritance rights empowers women both economically and socially, and rectifies a fundamental injustice. Secure tenure of land and home improves women's welfare and provides economic security and incentives for taking economic risks that lead to growth and important economic returns, including income. Equal land rights improve women's rights to credit, strengthening the assets of the family.
- Employment. Gender inequality exists in entering the workforce, conditions at work and exiting the labour market. Women's work, both paid and unpaid, is critical for the survival and security of the family and an important route through which families escape from poverty. It is also critical for women's empowerment. The expansion of national policies and programmes supporting the elimination of inequality in labour legislation and the labour market, gaps in earning and unemployment, encompassing the implementation of the Decent Work initiative in rights, protection and dialogue, will promote opportunities for women and men to obtain decent and productive work in conditions of freedom, equity, security and human dignity. The expansion of national policies and programmes to provide support for the care of children, people with disabilities and the elderly is an important intervention to enable women and men to participate equally in paid employment, empower women and the family and reinforce the role of men in family life, to allow reconciliation between professional and family responsibilities.
- Participation in national parliaments and local governmental bodies. Equality of opportunity in politics is a human right. Lack of women's participation in political bodies and decision-making makes societies less inclusive, less equalitarian and less democratic. Strengthening women's direct participation in decision-making bodies improves quality of governance and is an important condition to improve family-focused policy formulation in economic, social and political fields. Gender parity in parliaments (elected or nominated), and

in national, regional and local governmental bodies empowers women and improves the quality of public services delivered to families.

- Domestic violence. Gender inequality perpetuates violence against women, and violence against women restricts women's ability to use their capabilities. The economic, social and health-related costs of domestic violence and violence against women are extremely high. We recognize that the scale and complexity of gender-based violence means there is no uniform global solution; a multisectorial strategy is needed. National, local and family interventions and initiatives play an important role in defining solutions. Combating domestic violence is one of the most relevant instruments to achieve the "Goal 3 plus approach".

Recognizing all the above-mentioned affirmations, we, the delegates to the World Family Summit +5, commit ourselves to promote practical actions that can be taken within each of the above-mentioned strategies to bring about gender equality and empowerment of women and the strengthening of the family by:

- Promoting political commitment to mobilize a large group of change agents at different levels within countries and international, national, regional and local institutions who seek to implement a vision of the world
- Ensuring technical capacity to implement change
- Empowering institutional structures and processes to support the transformation, including structures that enable women and men to successfully claim their rights
- Demanding adequate financial resources to sustain the implementation of change
- Demanding accountability and monitoring systems to ensure that fundamental changes are broad-based and lasting

We express our unwavering resolve to implement the present declaration.



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Statement submitted by VIVAT International, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 30 and 31 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

* E/2010/100.



Statement

Empowerment of women

VIVAT International appreciates all that the United Nations officials, various ministries and civil society are doing to promote gender equality and to empower women in accordance with the Millennium Development Goals.

While we are grateful that the theme for the annual ministerial review segment this year takes up gender issues in relation to the internationally agreed goals, we would like to call your attention to a specific issue that concerns us. Goal 3 of the Millennium Development Goals about the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women does not include any reference to women's migration among the indicators¹ selected to monitor its progress.

According to the report of the Global Commission on International Migration,² women are almost half of the world's migrant and refugee population. For example, in 2000, the number of migrant women exceeded that of migrant men in all continents, except Africa and Asia. As mentioned by the International Organization for Migration (IOM) Deputy Director General on the occasion of International Women's Day,³ the labour immigration policies in many countries of destination are still modelled on jobs that are traditionally male-dominated, while the jobs usually performed by women are frequently undervalued and poorly integrated into admission policies. According to the Deputy Director General, more opportunities to migrate legally would prevent a lot of women from getting trapped in irregular, exploitative and abusive situations, including human trafficking.³

Women and girls are often duped into leaving their home countries by traffickers through purported job offers. The victims of this duplicity are then forced to become prostitutes or to do menial labour without compensation.

Therefore, we propose that, among the monitoring indicators for Goal 3, there also be one that measures the number of women and girls who are migrating and another one that measures the real implementation of the Palermo Protocols⁴ by attempting to indicate the number of those who are being trafficked globally, since women and girls are the primary victims of human trafficking and smuggling.

¹ Available from <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/mdg/Resources/Attach/Indicators/OfficialList2008.pdf>.

² Global Commission on International Migration, *Migration in an Interconnected World: New Directions for Action* (Switzerland, 2005). Available from <http://www.gcim.org/attachements/gcim-complete-report-2005.pdf>.

³ IOM News Release, 8 March 2010. Available from <http://iom.fi/content/view/240/10/>.

⁴ See General Assembly resolution 55/25.